

TRANSLATION;

11602.99.22

1-9

A

P O E M.

By THOMAS FRANKLIN,

Fellow of *Trinity-College*, CAMBRIDGE. K

[The] SECOND EDITION.



L O N D O N:

Printed for R. FRANKLIN in *Covent-Garden*, and sold by
R. DODSLEY in *Pall-Mall*, MDCCLIV.

[Price One Shilling.]

ch
ions

TRANSITION

OF

THE HUMAN RACE
FROM THE CAVE TO THE CATHEDRAL

BY



LONDON

Printed by J. G. Fisher, 10, Bedford Square, W.C.1
and by J. G. Fisher, 10, Bedford Square, W.C.1

44

TO THE
Right Honourable the EARLS of
G R A N V I L L E,
C H E S T E R F I E L D,
AND
O R R E R Y,

The best Judges of antient Learning,

AND
Most distinguish'd Patrons of modern Merit;

The following L I N E S

Are humbly inscribed

B Y

Their L O R D S H I P ' S

Most obedient and most

Devoted humble Servant,

THOMAS FRANCKLIN.

TO THE

Right Honourable the EARL of

GRANVILLE

CHIEF JUSTICE

AND

OF THE

The best Judges of ancient Learning

AND

Most distinguished Masters of modern Science

The following LINES

Are humbly inscribed

BY

THOMAS FRANKLIN

Esq. Advocate at Law

London

THOMAS FRANKLIN

(2)

TRANSLATION;

P O E M.

“ **S**UCH is our Pride, our Folly, or our Fate,
“ That few, but such as cannot write, Translate.
So DENHAM sung, who well the labour knew;
And an age past has left the maxim true.
Wit as of old, a proud imperious Lord,
Disdains the plenty of another's board;
And haughty Genius seeks, like Philip's son,
Paths never trod before, and worlds unknown.
Unaw'd by these, whilst hands impure dispense
The sacred streams of antient eloquence,
Pedants assume the task for scholars fit,
And blockheads rise interpreters of wit.

IN the fair field the vet'ran armies stand,
 A firm, unconquer'd, formidable band,
 When lo ! Translation comes and levels all ;
 By vulgar hands the bravest heroes fall.
 On eagle's wings see lofty Pindar soar ;
 Cowley attacks, and Pindar is no more.
 O'er Tibur's swan the muses wept in vain,
 And mourn'd their bard by cruel Dunster slain.
 By Ogilby and Trap great Maro fell,
 And Homer dy'd by Chapman and Ozell.

IN blest Arabia's plains unfading blow
 Flow'rs ever fragrant, fruits immortal grow,
 To northern climes th'unwilling guests convey,
 The fruit shall wither, and the flow'r decay ;
 Ev'n so when here the sweets of Athens come,
 Or the fair produce of imperial Rome,
 They pine and sicken in th'unfriendly shade,
 Their roses droop, and all their laurels fade.

LINE 18. *Cowley attacks, &c.* Nothing can be more contemptible than the translations and imitations of Pindar done by Cowley, which yet have had their admirers.

LINE 20. See Horace's Epistles, Satires, and Art of Poetry, *done into English* by S. Dunster, D. D. prebendary of Sarum.

LINE 21, 22. See their translations of Homer and Virgil.

THE modern critic, whose unletter'd pride,
 Big with itself, contemns the world beside,
 If haply told that Terence once cou'd charm,
 Each feeling heart that Sophocles cou'd warm,
 Scours ev'ry stall for Echard's dirty page, 35
 Or pores in Adams for th'Athenian stage;
 With joy he reads the servile mimics o'er,
 Pleas'd to discover what he guess'd before;
 Concludes that Attic wit's *extremely low*;
 And gives up Greece to Wotton and Perrault. 40

OUR shallow language, shallow'r judges say,
 Can ne'er the force of antient sense convey.

As well might Vanbrugh ev'ry stone revile
 That swells enormous Blenheim's awkward pile;
 The guiltless pen as well might Mauro blame, 45
 For writing ill, and fulying Arthur's fame;

Successful

LINE 31. *The modern critic, &c.* Les belles traductions (says Boileau) sont des preuves sans repliche en faveur des anciens, qu'on leur donne les Racines pour interpretes, & ils scauront plaire aujourd'hui comme autrefois. Certain it is, that the contempt, in which the antients are held by the illiterate wits of the present age, is in a great measure owing to the number of bad translations.

LINE 36. See Adams's prose translation of Sophocles.

LINE 39. *Extremely low.* A favourite coffee-house phrase.

LINE 40. *Wotton and Perrault,* See Wotton's discourse on antient and modern learning, and Perrault's defence of his Siecle de Louis XIV.

LINE 46. *Arthur's fame.* See Blackmore's king Arthur, an heroic poem.

Successless lovers blast the maid they woo'd,
 And these a Tongue they never understood ;
 That Tongue, which gave immortal Shakespear fame,
 Which boasts a Prior's, and a Thomson's name ; 50
 Graceful and chaste which flows in Addison,
 With native charms, and vigour all its own ;
 In Bolinbroke and Swift, whose beauties shine,
 In Rowe's soft numbers, Johnson's nervous line,
 Dryden's free vein, and Milton's work divine.

But, fuch, alas ! disdain to borrow fame, 55
 Or live like dulness in another's name ;
 And hence the task for noblest souls design'd,
 Giv'n to the weak, the tasteless, and the blind ;
 To some low wretch, who prostitute for pay
 Lets out to Curll the labours of the day, 60
 Careless who hurries o'er th' unblotted line,
 Impatient still to finish and to dine ;
 Or some pale pedant, whose encumber'd brain
 O'er the dull page hath toil'd for years in vain,
 Who writes at last ambitiously to shew 65
 How much a fool may read, how little know ;

LINE 60. *To Curll, &c.* Most of the bad translations, which we have
 of eminent authors, were done by garreteers under the inspection of this gentle-
 man, who paid them by the sheet for their hasty performances.

Can these on fancy's wing with Plato soar?
 Can these a Tully's active mind explore?
 Great nature's secret springs can these reveal,
 Or paint those passions, which they ne'er cou'd feel? 70
 Yet will they dare the pondrous lance to wield,
 Yet will they strive to lift the seven-fold shield,
 The rock of Ajax ev'ry child wou'd throw,
 And ev'ry stripling bend Ulysses' bow.

THERE are, who timid line by line pursue, 75
 Anxious to keep th' Original in view;
 Who mark each footstep where their master trod,
 And after all their pains have mist the road,

THERE are, an author's sense who boldly quit,
 As if ashamed to own the debt of wit; 80
 Who leave their fellow-trav'ler on the shore,
 Launch in the deep, and part to meet no more.

SOME from reflection catch the weaken'd ray,
 And scarce a gleam of doubtful sense convey,

C

Present

LINE 75, 79. *There are, &c.* The reader will easily recollect instances to illustrate each of these remarks, more especially the last; half our translations being done from translations by such as were never able to consult the original. One of these gentlemen having occasion in his version to mention Dionysius of Halicarnassus, not having the good fortune to be acquainted with any such writer, makes use of the French liberty of curtailings, and without scruple calls him Dennis of Halicarnassus. Mistakes as gross as this often occur, tho' perhaps not many altogether so ridiculous.

Present a picture's picture to your view, 85
Where not a line is just or feature true.

THUS Greece and Rome, in modern dress array'd,
Is but Antiquity in masquerade.
Disguis'd in Oldsworth's verse or Watson's prose,
What classic friend his alter'd Flaccus knows? 90
Whilst great Longinus gives to Welsted fame,
And Tacitus to Gordon lends his name,
Unmeaning strains debase the Mantuan muse,
And Terence speaks the language of the stews.

IN learning thus must Britain's sons decay, 95
And see her rival bear the prize away,
In arts as well as arms to Gallia yield,
And own her happier skill in either field?

See

LINE 91. See Welsted's translation of Longinus, done almost word for word from Boileau.

LINE 92. *To Gordon*.—This gentleman translated Tacitus in a very stiff and affected manner, transposing words, and placing the verb at the end of the sentence, according to the Latin idiom. He was called in his life-time Tacitus-Gordon.

LINE 97 *To Gallia yield*. It was said by a great wit in the last war, that he should never doubt of our success, if we could once bring ourselves to hate the French as heartily as we do the arts and sciences. It is indisputable, that they are more warmly encouraged, and consequently more cultivated and improved in France than amongst us. Their translations (especially in prose) are acknowledged to be more faithful and correct, and in general more lively and spirited than ours.

See where her boasted d'Ablancourt appears,
 Her Mongualts, Brumoys, Olivets, Daciers ; 100
 Careful to make each antient's merit known,
 Who just to others fame have rais'd their own ;
 Nor wonder these shou'd claim superior praise ;
 A nation thanks them, and a monarch pays.
 Far other fate attends our hireling bard ; 105
 A sneer his praise, a pittance his reward,
 The butt of wit, and jest of every muse,
 Foes laugh to scorn, and even friends abuse,
 The great Translator bids each dunce translate,
 And ranks us all with Tibbald and with Tate. 110

BUT

LINE 99. The French had so high an opinion of d'Ablancourt's merit as to think him deserving of the following epitaph :

L'illustre d'Ablancourt repose en ce tombeau,
 Son genie à son siècle a servi de flambeau,
 Dans ses fameux écrits toute la France admire
 Des Grecs & des Romains les précieux trefors ;

A son trepas on ne peut dire

Qui perd le plus, des vivans ou des morts.

LINE 109. *The great translator, &c.* Pope in his epistle to Arbuthnot, after his enumeration of dunces, concludes with these two Lines.

All these my modest satire bade *translate*,
 And own'd that nine such poets made a *Tate*.

I make no doubt but the very despicable light, in which Translation is here represented, may have deterr'd many from engaging in it, who would perhaps have made no contemptible figure in that branch of literature.

BUT know, whate'er proud Art hath call'd her own,
 The breathing canvas, and the sculptur'd stone,
 The poets verse; 'tis Imitation all;
 Great Nature only is Original.
 Her various charms in various forms express'd,
 They best have pleas'd us, who have copy'd best;
 And those still shine more eminently bright,
 Who shew the goddess in the fairest light.

So when great Shakespear to his Garrick join'd,
 With mutual aid conspire to rouse the mind,
 'Tis not a scene of idle mimickry,
 'Tis Lear's, Hamlet's, Richard's self we see;
 We feel the actor's strength, the poet's fire;
 With joy we praise, with rapture we admire,
 To see such pow'rs within the reach of art,
 And fiction thus subdue the human heart.

WHEN Sarto's pencil trac'd the faithful line,
 So just each stroke, so equal the design,
 That

LINE 129. Andrea del Sarto, being desired by Frederic duke of Mantua to copy a picture of Leo X. did it with so much justness, that Julio Romano, who drew the drapery of that piece under Raphael, took his copy for the original, and said to Vasari, "Don't I see the strokes that I struck with my own hand;" but Vasari shewing him Del Sarto's mark, he was convinced of his mistake.

The story is told at large in the 27th chapter of the first book of De Pile's Art of Painting.

That pleas'd he saw astonish'd Julio stand,
 Nor know his own, nor Raphael's magic hand; 130
 Blushing to find himself enamour'd grown
 Of rival charms and beauties not his own.

THEIRS be the task to comment and translate,
 Like these who judge, like these who imitate.

UNLESS an author like a mistress warms, 135
 How shall we hide his faults, or taste his charms,
 How all his modest, latent beauties find,
 How trace each lovelier feature of the mind,
 Soften each blemish, and each grace improve,
 And treat him with the dignity of love? 140

'TIS not enough that, fraught with learning's store,
 By the dim lamp the tasteless critic pore,
 'Tis not enough that wit's misguiding ray
 Uncertain glance, and yield a doubtful day,
 Not ev'n when both by partial nature giv'n 145
 United bless the favourite of heav'n;

D

Unless

LINE 135. *Unless*, &c. Roscommon says,

"Chuse then an author as you chuse a friend."

Perhaps the image is better drawn from the more lively passion.

Unless, by secret sympathy combin'd,
 The faithful glass reflects its kindred mind;
 Unless from soul to soul th' imparted fire
 Congenial catch and kindle warm desire; 150
 Ev'n such as lives in Rowe's enraptur'd strain,
 And gives Pharsalia to our eyes again,
 Where glowing in each animated line,
 We see the fiery soul of Lucan shine;
 Or such as gilds the fair historic page, 155
 For Smith reserv'd to grace our latter age;
 Such as o'er Dryden all its influence shed,
 And bade his muse recall the mighty dead,
 Such as in Pope's extensive genius shone,
 And made immortal Homer all our own. 160

VIEW all that proud antiquity displays,
 Count o'er her boasted heirs of endless praise,
 Who thought so nobly or who wrote so well,
 Britain can shew th' illustrious parallel.

Methinks

LINE 147. *Unless, by secret, &c.* A bias of inclination towards a particular author, and a similarity of genius in the translator seem more immediately necessary than wit or learning.

LINE 154. See Rowe's translation of Lucan's Pharsalia, at the end of which is a short supplement written in the true spirit of the original.

LINE 156. See Smith's translation of Thucydides, lately published.

(II)

Methinks I hear each venerable shade 165
For base neglect his genuine sons upbraid.
Why wou'd not Congreve Afer' charms revive,
Or tender Hammond bid Tibullus live?
Plautus had pleas'd in Vanbrugh's looser page,
And Otway shou'd have trod the Græcian stage; 170
Lucian wou'd shine unveil'd by Swift alone,
And Tully calls in vain for Middleton;
A Livy's sense demands a St. John's style,
And Plato asks a Melmoth or a Boyle.

Ev'N now there are, e'er learning take her flight, 175
And gothic darkness spread a second night;
Tho' science droop, and ling'ring arts decay,
There are, who gild the evening of our day.
Once more behold, majestic in her tears,
By Gray adorn'd, fair Elegy appears, 180
Whilst by her side the soft Elfrida stands,
And all our love and all our grief demands;
With Roman spirit Johnson's manly page
Rises severe to scourge a venal age;

Brown

LINE 168. Hammond, author of Love elegies.

LINE 180. See Elegy in a country churchyard.

LINE 181. Elfrida, by Mr. Mason.

LINE 183. Samuel Johnson, author of the Rambler, and also of two fine imitations of Juvenal.

Brown draws the pen in sacred truth's defence, 185
 And Armstrong paints his own benevolence.
 From antient models these exalted few
 Their fairest forms and bright ideas drew ;
 We know the fountain whence the waters came,
 Nor wonder at the clearness of the stream. 190

YET still, fair Greece, we see thy garlands torn,
 We see thee still thy widow'd altars mourn ;
 On us thy heroes still superior frown,
 Or look with awful indignation down ;
 The tears of Rome for injur'd learning flow, 195
 And Athens grieves that Britain is her foe.

WILL you not rise then, O ! you sons of fame,
 To vindicate the Greek and Roman name ?
 On friends oppress'd your gen'rous aid bestow,
 And pay the debt of gratitude you owe ? 200
 Or can you still their wrongs unpitying see,
 Nor social join with Warton and with Me ?

WHILST

LINE 185. See Essay on the Characteristics of lord Shaftsbury.

LINE 186. See an epistle on Benevolence, by Dr. Armstrong; so well known for his celebrated poem on Health, one of the best performances in the English language.

LINE 202. Mr. Warton has lately published a new translation of the eclogues and georgics of Virgil, and joined it to Mr. Pitt's excellent translation of the Æneid.

WHILST round his brows the Mantuan ivy twine,
 Cautious to tread in Attic paths be mine;
 To fame unknown, but emulous to please,
 Trembling I seek th' immortal Sophocles.

GENIUS of Greece do thou my breast inspire
 With some warm portion of thy poet's fire,
 From hands profane defend his much lov'd name;
 From cruel Tibbald wrest his mangled fame;
 Give him once more to bid the heart o'er-flow
 In graceful tears, and sympathizing woe;
 A father's death while soft Electra mourn,
 Or shed her sorrows o'er a brother's urn;
 Or fair Antigone her griefs relate;
 Or poor Tecmeffa weep her hapless state;
 Or OEdipus revolve the dark decrees of fate.
 Cou'd I like him the various passions move,
 Granville wou'd smile, and Chesterfield approve;

210

215 }

Each

LINE 210. Tibbald (or Theobald) translated two or three plays of Sophocles, and threaten'd the public with more.

Each letter'd son of science wou'd commend,
 Each gentle muse wou'd mark me for her friend;
 His well-pleas'd wou'd join a sister's praise,
 And Cam applauding consecrate the lays.



LINE 210. Tibbald (or Theobald) translated two or three plays of Sophocles, and presented the public with more.